



N.C. Division of Water Resources
publiccomments@ncdenr.gov

Dear Mr. Sledge and other DWR staff:

I'm writing to provide comments on the renewed NPDES permit #NC0000396 and Special Order by Consent #WQ S17-010, currently open for public input. As a member of Clean Water for North Carolina and a Buncombe County resident living approximately 6 miles away from the Asheville Steam Station, I care deeply about the local community and water resources affected by these agency decisions.

Regarding the NPDES permit, I hope that DWR will:

- Add requirements for Duke Energy to monitor all coal ash contaminants of concern during decanting, dewatering, and routine wastewater discharges from the ash holding basins. I am particularly concerned about the removal of monitoring requirements and effluent limits for thallium entirely from this permit, despite the fact that it has turned up in both on-site and off-site wells, and the lack of effluent limits for arsenic, selenium, nickel, and lead at Outfall 001.
- Add effluent limits for mercury at the constructed seeps (Outfall 101).
- Require physical and chemical treatment of all water discharged from the ash basins, not just when this is deemed "necessary." Please make this requirement mandatory and also specify the technologies and procedures Duke Energy should use to make sure that water quality is protected.

Regarding the Special Order by Consent, please consider:

- Significantly increasing the size of the fine for the 18 illegal seeps which have had a detrimental effect on environmental health and quality of life for the community near the plant and users of the French Broad River.
- Requiring Duke to share the results of the coal ash excavation and cleanup with neighboring impacted communities and the general public, and to provide ongoing results of monitoring to the public in a transparent way.
- Requiring Duke to develop a detailed plan for responding to weather events that could result in large releases of contaminants in the nearby area. As we experience a summer of unusually heavy rainfall and common flooding, safeguarding sensitive sites like the coal ash basins is increasingly important, as it's more likely that a breach could occur.

Thank you for this opportunity to submit comments.

Katie
Hicks
(828) 713-1631
kathryn.c.hicks@gmail.com